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**SCHOOL SPIRIT:
THREE BUILDINGS AT ST. GEORGE'S LISTED ON NATIONAL REGISTER**

Three distinguished buildings on the St. George's School campus in Middletown have received federal recognition for contributions to the history of architecture, art, and education. Frederick C. Williamson, Chairman of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission, announced that the National Park Service has added the Church of St. George, Little Chapel, and Memorial Schoolhouse to the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register is the Federal Government's official list of properties throughout the United States whose historical and architectural significance makes them worthy of preservation. The three buildings listed on the National Register reflect the rise of faith-based private education in America, particularly of Episcopal boarding schools in New England, at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

Founded in 1896 as an Episcopalian boarding school for boys, St. George's School on Purgatory Road in Middletown is one of the top private co-ed college preparatory schools in the United States, serving some 330 students. The National Register nomination focuses on three buildings on the 125-acre core campus: the Gothic Revival-style Church of St. George (1924-1928); the Little Chapel (1909-1911), and the Memorial Schoolhouse (1921-1923). Situated in the heart of the campus, near the athletic fields, these three linked buildings illustrate the mission of St. George's: to provide its students

with a well-rounded academic, physical, and religious education, intending to make them healthy in mind, body, and soul.

The Little Chapel is a one-story, red brick building with a slate gable roof and a concrete foundation. Providence architects Clarke, Howe, and Homer designed the building in the “Jacobethan” style—a variation on the Tudor Revival style based on mid-16th-to-early-17th-century English precedents. Construction began in 1909 and was completed in 1910-1911. Never intended to accommodate the entire St. George’s community, it was originally used for morning communion and other services, for religious classes, and for form meetings. In 1924, the chapel was moved to its present location, and soon afterwards, architect Ralph Adams Cram modified the Little Chapel to make it more consistent with his design for the adjacent Church of St. George.

The Memorial Schoolhouse was erected in 1923 to honor the sixteen St. George’s alumni who died in World War I. Designed by the nationally prominent firm of McKim, Mead & White of New York City, the Memorial Schoolhouse also exhibits elements of the “Jacobethan” style. The Schoolhouse stands three stories tall, and has horizontal massing, red brick walls and foundation, and cast stone trim. The slate roof is crowned by an octagonal wood-framed cupola topped by a weathervane in the image of St. George and the dragon. Built as a classroom building, the Memorial Schoolhouse continues to serve its original function.

Constructed between 1924-1927 and officially consecrated on St. George’s Day (April 23), 1928, the Gothic Revival-style Church of St. George is not only the most visually prominent, but also the most historically and architecturally significant, building on campus. Designed by the pre-eminent ecclesiastical architect of his day, Ralph Adams Cram of Boston, in close collaboration with the donor of the building, John Nicholas Brown, Jr., it is one of the most unique and extraordinarily beautiful boarding school chapels in America. The chapel also highlights the artistry of the renowned sculptor Joseph Coletti and master blacksmith Samuel A. Yellin.

Character-defining features include: the stone materials; the flying buttresses; the rib-vaulted roof; the pointed-arch window and door openings; the stained glass windows outlined with stone tracery; the cloister with its fan-vaulting, pointed arches and stone tracery; the great tower; and the copious ornamentation inside and out, combining both traditional Christian religious and contemporary iconography. Cram indicated that he took inspiration for the Chapel cloister from England's Gloucester Cathedral, but he modeled the overall design on a smaller, late 13th-century English Gothic church: St. Stephen's Church in the City of Westminster in London. Cram and Brown also appropriated design ideas from Spanish architecture of the Middle Ages and later periods. Significant features include the crystal chandeliers, the turret tower, and statues of Christopher Columbus and Don Quixote, as well as pieces of antique Spanish wrought iron purchased by Brown specifically for installation in the chapel.

The National Register nomination for the three buildings at St. George's School was prepared by preservation consultant Kathryn J. Cavanaugh. According to Edward F. Sanderson, executive director of the RI Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission, "One of Rhode Island's most striking historic views is the buildings of St. George's School rising above the landscape setting of open fields and marshes. This historic architecture has inspired generations of admirers."

In addition to honoring a property for its contribution to local, state, or national history, listing on the National Register provides additional benefits. It results in special consideration during the planning for Federal or federally assisted projects and makes properties eligible for Federal and Rhode Island tax benefits for historic rehabilitation projects. Owners of private property listed in the National Register are free to maintain, manage, or dispose of their property as they choose. As the state office for historic preservation, the Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission is the state agency responsible for reviewing and submitting Rhode Island nominations to the National Register.

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